

PREFACE

This *Right of Way Manual* was developed to provide technical guidance to professionals in several fields who are responsible for delivering property rights to support the Maine Department of Transportation's highway construction program. It complies with the Maine Statutes (MRSA) and Federal laws and regulations that control the process for acquiring private property rights for public purposes. As important, the *Manual* encourages sensitivity to the needs and concerns of citizens who are called on to relinquish property, and sometimes home or business, for the overall public good. Right of way is not merely a financial transaction to acquire real estate. It is a human endeavor that requires the highest level of tact, understanding and respect from the people who represent the State of Maine in this activity. Persons who survey, appraise, acquire property and assist relocation, are aware that public trust and confidence in the highway program rests in high degree with the professionalism and skill they display in carrying out their work. The *Manual* supports this understanding of the sensitivity and importance of the right of way process

The *Right of Way Manual* will be used not only by Department staff, but also by local agency personnel who acquire property for State funded projects, and by private service providers including contract appraisers, title professionals and acquisition specialists. The *Manual* addresses the specific topics of interest to each user, and also indicates the close relationships and interdependencies of the distinct right of way disciplines.

The *Right of Way Manual* is a living document that will change as controlling laws and regulations change, and more effective management practices develop. The text, headings and page numbering systems are designed to permit insertions or replacement of text without changing the basic structure of the *Manual* or replacement of full chapters or sections. The *Manual* is produced to permit traditional print publication as well as electronic publication.

The Right of Way Policy Committee of the Project Development Bureau is responsible for continued maintenance and update of the *Manual*. Users are encouraged to advise the Committee of need for corrections or provide suggestions that would improve the content of the *Manual*. Correspondence should be addressed to:

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Attn: Right of Way Policy Committee

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